

NOTICE

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications on Editorial matters should be addressed "The Editor," and those on business "The Manager," and not to individuals by name.

Correspondents are requested to forward their names and addresses with communications addressed to the Editor, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.

All letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

Advertisements and Subscriptions which are not ordered for a fixed period will be continued until countermanded.

Orders for extra copies of the Daily Press should be sent before 11 a.m. on the day of publication. After that hour it is not supplied.

BIRTH.

On the 26th instant, at 10, No. 10, Wyndham Street, the wife of E. H. CHAN, of a son.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, AUGUST 4th, 1896.

At the present moment, when public attention is being directed to Hainan as likely to become a temporary French dependency, it may be interesting to note some facts concerning it embodied in the report on the trade of Kingchow for the year 1883, by Mr. Consul Jordan, received by the last English mail. The value of the trade of Hainan shows a steady progress, in which both imports and exports share. Opium constitutes 41 per cent. of the value of the imports, and cotton goods form the second item on the list. Metals, more especially iron, show an improvement, and kerosene oil is gaining steadily in favour with the natives; every respectable town now boasts of its gaudy Chinese chandelier, though care is taken that the native oil is burned in the immediate presence of the presiding deity. A reaction has, however, set in against foreign matches, formerly largely imported, and recourse is being had to the old appliances. This, Mr. Jordan says, is due to Japanese matches having for a time outdone the Swedish, with the result that, being inferior articles, the natives got disgusted with them and returned to the primitive flint. It is especially likely that the opium import will be affected early by the Yunnan drug, small quantities of which are now, it is said, smuggled over from the mainland to Hainan, and its cheapness, the Consul thinks, may cause it to find favour with a people as poor as the Hainanese, who are also much addicted to smoking the drug, often as an antidote to the aches and fever engendered by the hot moist climate.

The export trade shows a satisfactory increase, especially in the staple products, the quantity of which in 1883 was 124,346 piculs as compared with 104,076 piculs in 1882. The production, however, might be much extended, we gather, if the growers could be induced to alter its preparation and to render it more suitable for the foreign market, and it is said a little instruction by a competent expert might make a vast improvement in this respect. There was last year an astonishing increase, Mr. Jordan tells us, in the number of pigs, oxen, and poultry exported; and a few bullocks were also for the first time, we believe, shipped from Hainan. This trade was at the commencement opposed by the Prefect on the ground that all the cattle were required for work in the fields, but the Consul promptly interfered and sanctioned the export. The export of raw silk and grasscloth showed a falling off as compared with previous years. Some silverware was exported for the first time last year. Altogether, though the trade of Hainan shows a steady increase on the whole, it is very clear that by judicious fostering it could be enormously increased. One great barrier to the development of trade is the want of a good harbour. Hainan, the port of Kingchow, is the only port in the island open to trade, but the approaches are, notoriously bad. Referring to this defect, Mr. Jordan says: "Unless something is done soon to improve the water approach to Hainan, there is a strong likelihood that in a few years the entrance to the port will be completely blocked. To some who daily witness the difficulties with which cargo boats have to contend in threading their way up the shallow tidal creek which leads to the town, it seems almost a marvel that trade continues to life under such conditions. The 'Shit' has extended about 1,500 yards since 1869, and at the same rate of progress will soon bridge the entrance of the creek. It is said that the entrance of a little engineering skill might divert a much larger volume of water into the branch of the river which flows past Hainan, and so secure the channel as to keep it open for the passage of boats at all states of the tide. Failing the application of some remedy, the possibility of securing a better port may have to require practical consideration, and unless Hainan is opened as a subsidiary port, the choice would seem to lie between Hainan, the port of Tamsui, and Puchien, a harbour about 16 miles east of this. The former is a good harbour, but is a very important centre of trade, while there is a bar at the entrance of the latter place." Nor has anything been done yet to clear the dangerous and tortuous Hainan Straits, though the does paid in Hainan for foreign vessels amount to a considerable sum every year. Mr. Jordan is of opinion that the Hainan Straits should be cleared to the greater portion of its revenue for the enrichment of the Imperial Treasury, and that a verdict of accidental death was returned.

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The British steamer *Douglas*, which arrived here yesterday from Coast ports, reports that it was in the Pacific Ocean, on the 30th July, H.M.S. *Champion*, and *Merlin*, and the French vessels *Volta*, *Asia*, *Viper*, and two torpedo boats *Asie* and *Arctique*, moored about Kimpia ports near the *Douglas* from *Chateau Renard*, and *Ligne*.

The *Hochi Shimbun*, a Japanese newspaper, reports that the Chinese passengers by the *City of Tokio*

